

GOLF COURSE NEWS

THE NEWSPAPER FOR THE GOLF COURSE INDUSTRY

A UNITED PUBLICATION
VOLUME 5, NUMBER 10
OCTOBER 1993

INSIDE

GCSAA Upheaval

Several insiders offer their views on the recent reorganization in Lawrence, Kan. 11

Irrigation Report

For a discussion of variable- vs. constant-frequency drives, turn to this month's special section 18

Cart Emissions

The California Air Resources Board holds the fate of gas-powered carts in its regulatory hands. 31



ORNAMENTALS COME OF AGE

Giant reed grass (above) is one of the many ornamental species used for both style and substance. See page 11.

COURSE MAINTENANCE

Focus on Michael Lee of Blackwolf Run 12
This month's Tour of Duty 14
On the Green: Finding water on dry sites 38

COURSE DEVELOPMENT

After 20 years, Catamount gets the go-ahead 3
Q&A with Bill Amick 22
Asian update: Americans busy abroad 22

COURSE MANAGEMENT

Spotlight on Chicago-based Kemper Sports 27
Nat'l Golf Properties makes first acquisition 27
Marketing Idea: Helicopter golf tours 28

SUPPLIER BUSINESS

Club Car to offer public stock 31
ConVault files patent infringement suits 32
What's new in the marketplace? 35

NGF study compares maintenance budgets

By MARK LESLIE

JUPITER, Fla. — Golf course superintendents, often asked to "perform magic with the same old things," may find artillery for their budget struggles in a new National Golf Foundation report, according to its project manager.

"A lot of superintendents get hammered pretty heavily because they are in charge of the biggest expense on a golf course," said Jerry Hinckley, who coordinated the report, *Understanding and Comparing Maintenance Budgets*. "Member committees and various people are constantly demanding more, yet aren't always willing to pay for it. They want [the conditions] they see on TV, and their expectations are very high."

Dividing the country into four regions and showing acreages and budgets at actual courses, the report demonstrates the relationship between expenditure and the number of acres maintained.

Most golf courses, Hinckley said, are "investing fairly heavily in improvements and new equipment every year. If you decide not to put any money back into the facility, above and beyond the basic maintenance, you're actually slipping back."

A panel of eight highly qualified golf course agronomists surveyed a

Continued on page 16



Lake Michigan and skyscrapers frame the Family Dye's par-3 and practice-range project in Chicago.

Dyes take their act downtown

By MARK LESLIE

CHICAGO — People stuck in congested, downtown Chicago with a mere 90 minutes on their hands will soon have a chance to play nine famous par-3s from the Family Dye.

The Vintage Group, formed by ex-Dye Equities president Charles Tourtellotte, is in the midst of developing a one-of-a-kind golf facility on a tiny bit of property that used to be the Illinois Central Railroad yards. Come next spring, golfers can walk through the underground pedway that connects all of the office

buildings and hotels in the area, take the elevator to the clubhouse and tee off at the Illinois Golf Center — a mere long drive or two from Chicago River and Lake Michigan.

Tourtellotte hired the Denver-based Perry Dye to design a nine-hole par-3 course because "Perry has a reputation for being able to work with small sites."

Tourtellotte has leased the 30-acre plot for 15 years from Metropolitan Structures and the Whitman Corp., the partnership that owns and manages Illinois Center,

Continued on page 26

More pump manufacturers join forces

By HAL PHILLIPS

DALLAS — Following a distinct industry trend, Pumping Systems Inc. (PSI) and Flowtronex International have merged, promising immediate benefits to customers.

The merger follows two other marriages: Commercial Pump Service Inc. and Watertronics; and Syncroflo Inc. and Western Pumping Systems. Only Carroll Childers Co. of Houston stands "alone" among pump manufacturers in the golf industry.

Flowtronex, PSI merge; Childers the lone holdout

Carroll Childers, who formed PSI in the early 1970s before leaving to create his current company, said the merger "comes as no surprise as there have been numerous such mergers and also closings of pump station manufacturers in recent years due largely to overpopulation in the industry and to downturn in

Continued on page 34



The Paiute Indian Reservation will be home to a 72-hole, Landmark-developed golf and gambling resort.

Ex-Landmark employees re-emerge

By PETER BLAIS

LAS VEGAS, Nevada — A proposed 72-hole golf resort on the Paiute Indian Reservation is among several major projects being developed by newly formed Landmark Golf Co.

Several former Landmark Land Co. executives teamed up earlier this summer to form Landmark Golf. The limited liability corporation offers design, golf operation and real estate development expertise. The firm already has offices in Palm Desert, Calif., and Scottsdale, Ariz.

In addition to the Las Vegas venture, the firm has

Continued on page 30

Kemper Management

Continued from page 27

irrigation systems at the other facilities as well and make additional investments where it makes sense," Schmidt said.

Schmidt said Kemper believes in re-investing in its properties in order to *optimize* rather than *maximize* a facility's potential. "You can maximize profits right away by just taking money out of a course and putting nothing back in. That works well for about 2-1/2 years. You don't notice too much the first year. Then the second everything starts falling apart until nothing is left."

"We believe in optimizing. It doesn't maximize your return in the short term. But it makes the product better each year

and allows the owner to make more profit for a longer time."

While it prefers ownership and lease arrangements, the company has not forsaken the management-only market. Kemper has management contracts at Vernon Hills (Ill.) Golf Course as well as Pipestone and Mound Golf Course, both in Miamisburg, Ohio.

"We strongly believe in giving the golfer value for his dollar. Kemper Lakes greens fees are \$95 and Vernon Hills \$10. Both are full all the time. That's because we provide value for both types of golfer. We take a lot of pride in that."

Kemper's mission, Schmidt said, is one of providing quality, not quantity. The company plans to acquire two to four courses per year. "That's a reasonable number we can absorb in a quality manner," the com-

pany president said. "We're excited about the opportunities out there. But we'll only do things that make sense."

Making those judgments will be an experienced management staff.

Chairman of the Board James Kemper is former chairman of the board of Kemper Group. He founded Kemper Lakes and oversees major policy decisions.

Chief Executive Officer Steven Lesnik has 25 years experience in communications, marketing and sports management. Before founding Kemper Sports in 1978, he was vice president of Kemper Group.

Other key personnel include Schmidt, vice presidents Ben Brundred, Tom Lenz and Robert Wallace, Chief Financial Officer Bradley Stake, Marketing Manager Jeff Hunt and Director of Golf Bob Spence.

Landmark re-emerges

Continued from page 1

a 36-hole development planned across the street from the TPC at Scottsdale, an 18-hole public layout under consideration in Indio, Calif., and an 18-hole course along the coast of Chile scheduled to begin construction later this year.

"Development has slowed across the country. But considering how difficult things have been since the late 1980s, we're doing pretty well," said Brian Curley, former director of golf course design construction for Landmark Signature Courses and a partner in the new firm.

Construction should begin in early 1994 on the first 36 holes at Snow Mountain Resort, located on 3,800 acres of Paiute land 12 miles north of Las Vegas. All four courses should be completed within two years, according to former PGA Tour player Johnny Pott, a Landmark partner and project supervisor.

Pete Dye, Pott and Curley are combining to design the courses, which will cost about \$7 million piece. A single clubhouse will serve all 72 holes. The entire golf project is pegged at \$40 million. Casinos, hotels and residential areas are also planned.

"There are definite advantages to working with Indian land," Curley said. "There is no land cost. They have very well-established water rights. You only have to deal with federal agencies and there are no taxes. Imagine all those benefits on a site just 12 miles from downtown."

Despite its proximity to Las Vegas, the Paiutes originally planned not to have gambling at the resort. That restricted the type and amount of financing to a bond issue or traditional financing, Curley said. The tribal council now plans casinos, which has attracted more financing options, he added.

"The council is meeting soon to decide what to do," Curley said.

Paradise Ridge in Scottsdale is a year away from starting construction, according to head partner Ernie Vossler. The 2,000-acre project will have a large residential area. The Indio, Calif., facility would be adjacent to Del Webb's Sun City project, and the Chile layout will be an hour from Santiago.

Landmark Land Co.'s financial woes have been well-chronicled. The Resolution Trust Corp. recently auctioned off the bankrupt firm's major properties, including PGA West, Carmel Valley Ranch, Mission Hills Country Club, LaQuinta Hotel Golf & Tennis Resort, Palm Beach Polo & Country Club and Kiawah Island Resort (see related story, page 27).

But despite those problems, Landmark Golf's partners didn't hesitate to use the name. "People in the golf business were aware of the financial situation [that brought down Landmark Land Co.]," Curley said. "Landmark's reputation for creating quality facilities has not been tarnished. The problems that hurt Landmark weren't particular to Landmark. Just about anyone dealing with S&Ls had problems during the 1980s."

National Golf Foundation Vice President Rick Norton agreed. "I can't see that the name or association is a positive or a negative," Norton said. "They obviously have good experience in the golf business. They certainly can't be held responsible for Landmark [Land Co.'s] situation."

Landmark Golf's partners include former Landmark Land executives Vossler (ex-senior VP), Pott (helped design/build Carmel Valley and PGA West), Curley, William "Buzz" Gill (ex-president of Landmark Management Co.) and Chuck Fairbanks (ex-president of Landmark Land Co. of Arizona Inc.).

THE PERFECT GROWING MEDIUM

However you grow turf, this is the one show you need to attend! Presenting experts from every line of turf management, the OTF Show has a complete program track that's tailored just for you.

Grow your knowledge by attending the complete OTF conference with updates and training specifically for:

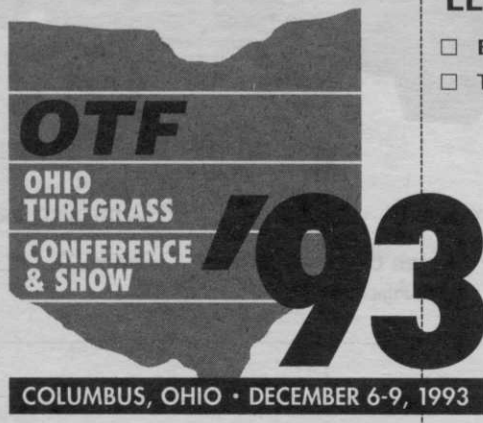
- LAWN CARE
- GOLF TURF
- SPORTS TURF
- GROUNDS MANAGEMENT



Grow your efficiency on the expanded trade show floor by learning about the equipment, materials, and supplies that will save you time and money while helping you better manage your turf.

Grow your contacts by meeting, and getting to know, your fellow professionals from around the state and around the country. Enjoy your old friends and meet new ones. Thousands of golf, grounds, lawn care and sports turf managers make OTF the one show they "must" attend.

OHIO TURFGRASS CONFERENCE & SHOW DECEMBER 6-9 • COLUMBUS, OHIO



LET'S GROW! Rush me more information on:

- Exhibiting at the OTF Show Attending (pre-registration)
 The benefits of Membership in the Ohio Turfgrass Foundation

Name _____
 Company _____
 Street Address _____
 City, State, Zip _____
 Phone _____ Fax _____

Detach and mail to: The Ohio Turfgrass Foundation, 2021 Coffey Rd, Columbus, OH 43210 • Phone: 614-292-2601 • FAX: 614-292-1626